



NEWS

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2nd District

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Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and State Sen. Curren Price Join in Major Push for President Obama's National Health Reform Plan to Provide Coverage for Every Child in America

LOS ANGELES – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today joined forces with state Sen. Curren Price (D-Los Angeles) in a state-and-county effort to urge Congress to pass comprehensive national health reform legislation that would include coverage for more than nine million uninsured children in the United States.

On a motion introduced by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, the five members of the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution urging Congress and the Obama Administration to include low-income children and pregnant women in their efforts to achieve universal health coverage this year.

Sen. Price recently guided a similar resolution, Senate Resolution 24, to passage in the state Senate, while Sen. Ridley-Thomas this week attended an organizing conference on health care for children at Haley Farm in Tennessee hosted by Marian Wright Edelman, president and founder of the Children's Defense Fund.

The Supervisor said Mrs. Edelman told activists from across the nation that "the nation (and county) has to make children's health and mental health a top priority."

"Sen. Price and I stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Marian Wright Edelman on this all-important push to safeguard the lives of our children -- from infants to

toddlers to teens – by making sure they have health coverage and access to essential medical care,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

The two lawmakers urged other state and local leaders to join the effort for universal health care that President Barack Obama outlined tonight in a nationally televised news conference.

“President Barack Obama keenly understands what is at stake,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and Sen. Price said in a joint statement. “He knows national health reform will not enact true reform unless it provides health coverage for kids nationwide.”

Mrs. Edelman said she agrees with the president “that the status quo is no longer an option for our nation’s children as well as the tens of millions of other Americans who are uninsured and under-insured.”

One in nine children in American is uninsured. In California, the ratio is even higher – one in eight children. About 329,000 uninsured children live in Los Angeles County. Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said these children are particularly vulnerable because of budget cuts caused by the economic crisis.

In May, the Supervisor traveled to Washington D.C. with the other members of the board to express strong universal health reform that would cover medically-necessary comprehensive services, including prescription drugs, primary and preventive care, mental health and substance abuse, vision and dental benefits.

“Urging affordable and comprehensive coverage for children would be consistent with the county’s call for universal health coverage,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

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